THE

WEST INDIA QUESTION

PLAINLY STATED;

AND

THE ONLY PRACTICAL REMEDY

BRIEFLY CONSIDERED:

IN A

LETTER

TO THE

RIGHT HON. HENRY GOULBURN,

CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

BY

FORTUNATUS DWARRIS,

OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, ESQUIRE, BARRISTER AT LAW.

"You do seem to know
Something of me or what concerns me; pray you
(Since doubting things go ill often hurts more
Than to be sure they do:—for certainties
Either are past remedies; or, timely knowing,
The remedy 's then born,) discover to me
What both you spur and stop."

Cymbeline, Act i. *Sc.* 7.

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The publication of this Pamphlet has been delayed by accidental causes, but the questions at issue remaining equally open after the disposal of Mr. Wilmot Horton's motion for the production of the evidence in the Demerary case, as when that motion was pending, the Author has sent it to press without any alterations.

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THE

WEST INDIA QUESTION

PLAINLY STATED.

TO THE RIGHT HON. HENRY GOULBURN,

CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

Middle Temple, February 29, 1828.

DEAR SIR,

It is not from the confidence which, whatever our own sentiments may be, it is natural and pleasing to repose in undeviating consistency, unblemished integrity, and unsuspected honour—nor is it on any grounds, however solid, of public or private respect, that I take the liberty of addressing to you the following remarks. In submitting these observations to your notice, I am influenced in the first place by your present situation in his majesty's government; there appearing to me, for reasons which will be disclosed in the sequel, a peculiar

propriety in offering my suggestions to that quarter, from which alone, in my apprehension, a remedy for the evils complained of can proceed. And if the station you at present hold in his majesty's councils furnishes a ground for the step I am taking, a reason equally cogent will be found, in the office you formerly filled, as Under Secretary for the Colonies. In the latter character you were naturally rendered familiar with my subject, and became, to a great extent, in possession of the details. I am also, I confess, not unmindful that to your kindness and that of your brother, my talented friend, now rapidly rising to eminence in his profession, I owe my own opportunities of acquiring information upon the subject. The appointment I then received afforded me singular advantages for acquiring local knowledge from the most authentic sources, and from the fountain head of personal observation. Though myself born in the West Indies, I had left them in my infancy; knew nothing of their affairs; had taken no part in the discussions respecting them, and except as a friend to rational, constitutional liberty, was without any bias or preconceived opinions upon the subject; otherwise, need I say, my appointment would never have met the concurrence of Lord Bathurst. For that noble

lord, then at the head of the department of the colonies, I entertain, and have never failed to express, sentiments of the highest respect and veneration (*a*). Cherishing those sentiments with respect to the noble lord, I attach a proportionate value to his unsolicited acknowledgment, that I have discharged the delicate and important duties which his majesty had been graciously pleased to confide to me, in a manner entitling me to the approbation of his majesty's government. But it becomes for that very reason, the more necessary to observe—and I desire to state it explicitly—that in the observations and suggestions which I have now the honour to submit to you, there is nothing of an official character: they contain, and will be understood to express, the views and opinions only of a private individual. The writer's motives, if it be necessary to state them, will be found in the desire to afford information—in the honest ambition to be useful. His hints and notices (for they affect to be no more) consist for the most part of scattered *memoranda* and *excerpta* from his travelling portfolio, with some later fruits of reflection and discussion at home (*b*). To collect and arrange these is the task he has undertaken. Some apology is due for the perfunctory manner in which that

engagement has been fulfilled. But there appeared to him imminent danger of the legislature, early in the present session, adopting some fatal measure upon a subject ill understood—and perhaps irrevocably. Under such circumstances, no man, whose communications may be serviceable, should be silent. But the time was short—the occasion urgent—the sense of duty strong: if the conception be vigorous, allowances will be made for the execution!

It appears by the printed votes of the House of Commons that the late zealous and indefatigable, as well as candid and enlightened Under Secretary of the Colonies, Mr. Wilmot Horton, has given notice of a motion for the production of the evidence in the Demerara case; and the West India question is therefore about to be again practically considered. The Orders in Council in question, regarded as a failure or disapproved by all parties, seem to be considered as virtually abandoned. Assuming this to be the case, (and it is at least sufficiently accurate for my present purpose,) this great and complicated question will anew become the subject of parliamentary discussion; and most important and desirable it is, that it should be carefully examined in all its bearings, with a view, if possible, to its final adjudication

and settlement. The frequent agitation of the question cannot do otherwise than endanger the safety of the colonies. Who, under such circumstances, will be at a loss to conceive the unsettled state of mind of the slave population—the apprehension of the planters—and the necessary consequences of these—mutual jealousy, distrust, fear, and hatred? Such is the picture of the colonies: and what is the state of the proprietors and mortgagees at home? all confidence impaired—all credit on the security of West India property destroyed —all energies paralysed—all capital despaired of, or sought to be withdrawn! And to what are these evils attributable? The causes are numerous and complex; but the first and principal I believe to be—a state of uncertainty; the circumstance that nothing is believed to be determined on;—nothing clearly seen;—nothing unalterably fixed;—*the want of the worst being known!* The colonists object to the Orders in Council with considerable force that, while they fail of effecting the good expected from them, certain of the proposed ameliorations incur the risk of undefined and irremediable evil. "The slave," say they, "does not see the whole of the benefit intended him, nor the planter the extent of the mischief with which

he is threatened. Something seems to be still kept back. Whatever the colonist yields, he is not to suppose *that* the only sacrifice required of him. One concession is avowedly to pave the way to another. Whatever the slave obtains is only ancillary to his getting something more; another grasp at an uncommunicated good; another step in the doubtful advance to a still protracted freedom. Thus must the parties—nominally master and slave—struggle on with mutually exasperated feelings, till they attain a period wholly unascertained; which the one party will be struggling to accelerate, and the other is interested to retard: a point, at which all subordination ceases, when estates can no longer be worked; a crisis, fatal to all interests and involving, in one common ruin, capital, and skill, and labour:—all cultivation —all improvement—and all happiness!"

Such, with the animated tone, is the gloomy feeling of the colonist, and his statements are not undeserving of attention. That the question should be set at rest, that something conclusive should be done, all good and reflecting men, and particularly those who best know the real difficulties of the subject, must ardently desire. Happy shall I be, if I can in any way contribute to elucidate those parts of the sub-

ject still left confessedly obscure, or assist by any useful suggestion, in the equitable determination of this long-agitated question. With this view, it is proposed to consider this embarrassing subject in a plain and even popular manner, upon its intrinsic merits. Complicated as it has become, (and partly from the method of treating it,) it may be simplified by reducing it to three general heads:—

1st, The present system, with its alleged evils.
2d, The remedy proposed.
3d, The remedy required.

THE PRESENT SYSTEM, WITH ITS ALLEGED EVILS.

Fortunately, at the present stage of the inquiry, certain points may be considered as established or conceded. It would now be thought puerile and idle to declaim about natural rights—and it is at last discovered to be useless to reason upon abstract principles. The law of England *has*, whether inconsiderately or not, sanctioned a property in slaves. On the faith of its acts and declarations, property has been invested in their purchase, and plantations have been settled. Nor is this all: many estates are said to have been granted, and to

be yet held, on the express terms of their cultivation by slaves (*c*). It is at least clear, that this was always an implied condition. Subsequently, the colonies objected to, and even prohibited, the further importation of slaves (*d*). The parent state replied to their remonstrances, "we cannot allow the colonies to check or discourage a trade so beneficial to the nation." The law of the mother country, and the conditions imposed by the original grantor, are the foundation of this unfortunate species of property. Many other kinds of property (*e*), tithes, forfeitures, deodands, manorial rights, are also obnoxious; many rules of law, such as the exclusion of the half-blood from inheriting real property; the exclusion of a father from succeeding to the estate of his son, dying without issue; corruption of blood, &c., have been often disapproved, and might now be modelled differently, but as established and recognised by legislative and judicial authority, they cannot be infringed without injustice. Morally, socially, and politically considered, the rights of property, duly created, and under legitimate sanctions, must be held sacred. A statesman of the present day will content himself with observing, "I *find* slaves property!"

Slaves, then, being property, because the law

has made them such, and property being sacred, and the obligation to maintain it inviolate, part of the original contract of society, it is almost superfluous to ask whether, in any country, where rights are respected, property can be taken from the owner without compensation? Assuredly it cannot. If then it cannot rightfully be taken away, without compensation, can it be more justifiably endangered or deteriorated? In other words, may that be brought about indirectly, which it is admitted cannot be effected directly? This will scarcely be contended. Surely no man has a right to try experiments upon my property, while it continues mine: if my neighbour is disposed to try new methods of productive labour upon any chosen spot, let him first become the purchaser of the soil and its appurtenances. If it be said, that what is now proposed is a great national experiment; then let it be tried at the national expense!

Without compensation, then, property cannot be rightfully taken or deteriorated; and I lay out of the question, what it would be indecent for a moment to suppose—the perpetration of a deliberate wrong. But is there any thing in the use of property, however unquestioned; in the abuse of rights, the most fully admitted; in other words, in the conduct of

the master, or the actual condition of the slave, to require, and therefore to justify, the interference of the parent state? This is an important particular, as leading to inquiry into the present condition and treatment of the slave population; and the more material, as improvement in these respects is constantly represented by the anti-colonial party in this country as mere delusion. "It is to be regretted," says the intelligent and candid author of the West-India question practically considered, "that the truth, with respect to those accusations, cannot be ascertained, as it is one so susceptible of proof or contradiction." Again, "as the appeals made by the abolitionists to the people rest materially on the assertion of the misery and privation at this moment experienced by the negroes, it certainly would be advisable, if it were possible, that such conclusive evidence were brought forward, either in support or in contradiction of that assertion, as would no longer leave this part of the question in doubt; which doubt, at this period, operates so invidiously and prejudicially against the West-India body." The observation is perfectly just, and the deficiency has not yet, that I am aware of, been supplied. The inquiry is, however, in every respect most material. If the colonies

are steadily improving, as respects the condition of *all* their population; if, upon a candid construction of their proceedings, they are at present framing, not merely highly-amended, but relatively good laws, (though their jurisprudence is yet very far from attaining that theoretical perfection which men of ardent minds too impetuously require); if (I still put it hypothetically) the condition of the slave in religious culture, in improved moral conduct (the result of increased self-respect), in domestic comfort, in the acquisition and enjoyment of property, the fruit of honest industry, is hourly increasing, has not the planter some reason to protest against an indiscreet zeal, by which an improved and improving state shall be interfered with, disturbed, and possibly counteracted? The West-India interest may, it will be conceded to me, in such case, reasonably call upon a deliberative assembly (not engaged upon a canal or a rail-road, but required to overturn a legislative system of centuries standing, and in which the most important interests are involved), to examine, before they decide—to explore the signs of the times—to ascertain facts —to pause upon hazardous experiments—to resist sudden and violent, as opposed to mild and gradual, changes!

Is there, then, in our colonies progressive advancement?—an improved moral feeling in the master, and a better secured protection to the slave? I maintain the affirmative of both propositions. If I am asked, in what the advancement in the condition of the slave consists? I anwer,

In gentleness of treatment, and acknowledgment of his rights by his master;

In access to religious instruction;

In opportunities of intellectual improvement;

In the enjoyment of domestic comfort;

In a better secured protection for his person;

In a recognised right to his property;

In the power of disposing of his gains by will;

In the means and the motives tending to an accumulation of property; and eventually of purchasing his freedom, with the consent of his owner, if he is of industrious habits.

If I am desired to point out the indications of an improved feeling in the master, I instance—

The more than facility, the aid the colonists have given to the extension of the church establishment;

The institution and support of schools, to which children of all colours are indiscriminately admitted;

The encouragement afforded to the baptism and marriage of slaves;

The infrequency of any new cases of barbarity (the instances of cruelty, with the exception of those contained in the Berbice Fiscal's Reports, being all old stock stories);

The number and frequency of voluntary manumissions, and the state of manners, which makes an application for a slave to be allowed to purchase his freedom, invariably attended to;

The exclusion from society of persons accused or suspected of cruelty;

The circumstance that, at Marshal's sale, when it is understood that a negro is bidding for his freedom, no person is found to oppose him.

The circumstance of its being unusual, in practice, though unfortunately sanctioned by law, to separate families of slaves at public sales.

The fact of its being equally unusual for persons to become purchasers of slaves at such sales, till they obtain the willing consent of the negroes themselves.

The invariable practice, on the sale of tradesmen, domestics, and other unattached slaves, of previously giving them time to look about for a purchaser.

The law and usage that a premium is allowed to mothers on an increase of children by the same father, and which, it may be observed, there is no inducement to withhold, for though paid by the master in the first instance, it is deducted from his public taxes.

But let the objections of the anti-colonists to the present system be successively stated and examined. It is urged by them,

1st. *That nothing effectual has yet been done in the way of improvement by the colonists themselves.* I give a due prominence to this hardy and adventurous assertion.

Answer. Nothing done! no change effected! Look at the representations of persons so respectable as Master Stephen and Mr. Macaulay as to the state of the slave colonies thirty years ago. Does any reasonable man believe the present condition of the islands to resemble the pictures there drawn, in any, the slightest, degree? Either those accounts are correct, or they are not. If they have any pretension to accuracy, a most astonishing change for the better has undeniably taken place. If the portrait never was faithful, then, to be sure, *cadit quæstio.* But great part of those statements every candid reader will readily admit had some foundation in truth; and the mistake

of those well-intentioned persons consists in shutting their eyes to all recent improvements, in believing that the West Indies have been stationary while all the rest of the world was rapidly advancing; in ill-judgingly refusing the colonists credit for what they have done, in order to compel them to do more, which they ought to do. Nothing done! The short space of a quarter of a century has effected a revolution in feelings and manners in these remote colonies, more extensive, signal, and complete, than, I firmly believe, was ever before known, in the same time, in the history of man! But the discussion has hitherto been dealing in generals and in the region of opinions rather than facts. It is proper to come to a closer consideration of particulars for the benefit of candid inquirers, who have not possessed opportunities of personal observation: I will collect facts diligently, let these weigh them dispassionately.

Objection 2.—*Slaves cannot legally possess property.*

A. What they before virtually and practically enjoyed, is now, in numerous instances, secured to them by law; and they can also bequeath their acquisitions to others by will. And it should be observed, that, even before the recent

ameliorations, their *peculium* was secured to them, if not by law, by the state of manners.

Objection 3.—*Marriage is not encouraged.*

A. I assert the contrary. The slave, indeed, is not compelled to marry, which would be a profanation; but he is recommended, and his prejudices against it are gradually yielding. That few marriages are yet registered, or even that few take place, is most inconclusive to prove that marriage is not *encouraged.*

Objection 4.—*Slaves work under the lash.*

A. The power of punishment upon estates (and especially as delegated to inferior agents) is now much restricted. The cart-whip, either as an instrument of punishment, or as a symbol of authority, has grown out of use. The cat-o'-nine-tails, which is used in the British army, is substituted for it. Indeed, the first frenzy of improvement produced in the island of Dominica a beautiful specimen of crude legislation upon this subject. The draft of the amended slave-bill actually abolished the use of the cart-whip for any purpose whatever, within that colony. The exhibition of the whip in the field (for it is very rarely used) should, I agree, be done away with. The question of punishment, however, to a practical reformer, presents considerable difficulties. It is, at the present time, in several

islands, though by no means effectually, regulated by law.

Objection 5. *The master regulates the measure of the slaves' labour.*

A. Nevertheless they have, in the intervals of work, more time their own, than the labourer in England; to wit, half an hour to breakfast, and two hours for dinner. It is said they begin their toil before day, and the assertion is true; but in such a climate it is no hardship to perform their work in the cool of the morning. It ought, in common candour, at the same time to have been stated, that in the countries of which we are now speaking, all classes rise at gun-fire; that is, at five o'clock in the morning. Again, the field labour is truly represented as severe; but so is ploughing, and hedging, and ditching, in England, though, I admit, not quite in the same degree, as agriculture here, is in a state of greater perfection. There is, however, good reason to believe, that the use of the plough, superseding the hoe, will gradually diminish the labour required in the West Indies. It should not escape attention, too, when speaking of the labour exacted in crop time (constantly dwelt upon by the abolitionists as oppressive, because of its uncertain duration) that, as windmills are commonly used in the islands, there will neces-

sarily be many days when the mill cannot work, for an unanswerable reason, because there is no wind.

In England, as well as in the colonies, the master of servants "regulates the measure of their labour," but the hours are conventional: so in almost all the islands, the working hours are ascertained and fixed by law. What more is or can be done for the labouring classes in any country?

At the same time, I am disposed to admit that the measure of labour may now be left too much to the discretion of the master. Hard masters of estates weak in hands, may occasionally be guilty of protracting the labour of the slave into the night. This should be prohibited, and no work allowed to be carried on more than one hour after sunset, under stated penalties. Certain and limited task-work should be encouraged, and the slave population protected from being over-worked, not only by the dead letter, but by the living and available sanction of the law.

Objection 6.—*The master regulates the measure of their food.*

A. By no means. It is in almost every island prescribed and regulated by law; and yet, if any thing could be safely left to the master, it

would be this article. Who starves or ill-treats his dray-horse? Gentleness of treatment is not more the master's duty than his interest. The practice, now becoming prevalent, of growing provisions in large quantities upon estates, will be very advantageous in securing slaves being more regularly fed, and on that account deserves encouragement.

Objection 7.—*They receive no wages.*

(I include this idle objection because it has been frequently urged, though evidently used *ad captandum* purely.)

A. True; but their labour is not, therefore, uncompensated. They certainly receive no wages, *eo nomine;* but they have a hut or cottage, land, clothes, provisions, medical attendance when ill, and the satisfactory assurance that, in case of their death, their children will, in like manner, be provided for. Let those in England who are engaged in the arduous and fearfully increasing struggle to live, let the feeling and prudent, who, as insurers of their lives, attest the value of securing some, however scanty, provision for their posterity, appreciate this advantage! Slaves, besides, generally receive elementary instruction in the principles of religion, and the sort of knowledge suited to their station. The want of many of

these advantages is often felt and deplored by the free people of colour, who are commonly in a state of the most miserable destitution. I am not of the number of those who will compare the predial slave to the English labourer, in the latter's day of manly health and strength, and —where it remains unaffected by the debasing influence of the poor-laws—of conscious independence. But what is the state of the sick poor in England? Certainly not comparable to that of the slave in the colonies! A plantation doctor receives from £70 to £100 per annum, for the care of the slaves upon an estate, and medicine is also provided by the owner. The bowels of the poor in England (*f*) are farmed out to the village apothecary at the rate of from £5 to £15 per parish. The history of the poor, carefully analyzed, would afford other painful illustrations; but it is an ungrateful subject, and I will not pursue it.

Objection 8.—*Sunday labour is permitted: the Sunday market is discreditable, and has the most pernicious effects.*

A. Sunday, I allow, should not be a day of worldly occupation; yet, on the other hand, one-sixth of a slave's labour is a great deal for a master to relinquish, without compensation. I am here supposing that the master may be re-

quired to give up the whole of Saturday. The day, as Dr. Chalmers suggested, should be bought. For the purpose of the market half the Saturday would be sufficient, and out of crop time *that*, I am assured, is usually given. Where the slave has grounds to cultivate, and is not fed, if he does not work in them on Sunday, he requires the whole of Saturday. I will endeavour to explain the different modes of proceeding and their consequences. Where slaves are fed (have provisions found) by the master, were it not for the Sunday market, the Sabbath might be devoted to repose, religious observances, and instruction. In such case, as the feeding them is very expensive, it might be too much to require the master to give up one entire day; the afternoon might be sufficient. When the slaves have merely land given them to grow their own provisions, another day, exclusive of Sunday, ought clearly to be allowed, to enable them to cultivate provision grounds, and attend the market. The Sunday then, would be differently employed. For myself, I have always considered, that if, instead of late, fevered and tired, the slave returned fresh, soothed and humanized, from his day of rest to his Monday's labour, the master would sustain little loss. He would see the

negro improve in character and condition, enjoy and appreciate domestic comfort, and gradually acquire self-respect. His house,—his person,—would be attended to, and become neat and clean. He would be seen on the Sabbath day, nursing his children (now too often neglected), learning to read his Bible, or, as he made greater proficiency, teaching his little ones to read and spell. I saw a Sunday thus spent, at Antigua, to my very great refreshment and delight.

Objection 9.—*Every black man is considered a slave: there is a presumption of slavery from colour.*

A. This is (and I am not the person to deny it) an opprobrium where it exists; but it is nearly exploded, and the doctrine is expressly repudiated by most of the colonies, who refer to their laws, which allow a freedom from reputation. It however, no doubt (and very strange it seems), did at one time obtain. The opposite principle now generally prevails, but Grenada has the peculiar merit of having made an explicit declaration upon the subject.

Objection 10.—*Slave evidence is excluded.*

A. This was till lately true, and I think indefensible, while it continued the case; but considerable progress has been made recently, in carrying the suggestions of government in this in-

stance into effect, while some colonies have carried it to a greater extent than the provisions required. The legislature of Tobago has consented to receive slave evidence in all cases without any restriction—"to do away altogether with the distinction which has heretofore prevailed between the admission of the evidence of persons free and bond, leaving them equally open to the same common law exceptions." The island of Barbadoes has admitted the evidence of slaves, not only in criminal cases, "misdemeanour, murder, felony, or other offence, except forgery," but also "in all cases where civil actions for trespass or assault may be brought against any person whomsoever." Other colonies, Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent, have admitted slave evidence against all persons except the owner. If negro evidence is also not at present received in Jamaica, it is not because the Jamaica legislature has persisted in refusing that concession—with trial by jury and the right to property,—to slaves, but because, when enacted by that legislature, the act has, on particular grounds, affecting religious toleration, been disallowed by his Majesty at home.

Objection 11.—*The separation of families by judicial sale is still allowed, and operates most cruelly.*

A. An admitted evil; and the power of separation on voluntary sales is not a whit less objectionable. But if the law is odious and cruel, how meritorious is the practice which is opposed to the law, as is generally the case in this instance!

Objection 12.—*Fines and taxes have been imposed, with a view to prevent or discourage manumissions.*

A. These charges, or rather securities (for such they really were), are almost every where abolished, and when they did exist, proceeded upon grounds essentially different from those represented in this country. The object was, undoubtedly, to prevent proprietors throwing their old and impotent slaves as burthens upon the public. It was against such event only that security was taken—I think not unreasonably. From the state of manners, a manumission is rarely,—I am well assured and implicitly believe, —never, refused to a slave desirous and capable of purchasing his freedom. At their deaths, and even in their lives, the planters are extremely liberal in enfranchising their faithful domestic slaves, and so far from a leaning being found to exist against freedom, it was admitted that when a slave bids by a friend at Marshal's sale, which often happens, no person will oppose him.

Objection 13 —*Masters are opposed to the religious instruction of their slaves.*

A. To disabuse the public mind in this particular, it is only necessary to refer to the concurrent testimony of the bishops of both dioceses, and to the reports made to them by the inferior clergy. See *post*, p. 26—31.

Objection 14.—*Population decreases, and the diminution in numbers must proceed from the ill treatment the slaves receive.*

A. First,—The *fact* is not clearly or universally established. In Barbadoes there is an increase of population. If this is not the case in all the colonies, *non sequitur* that it is occasioned by ill usage, and the contrary is the truth. The numbers were originally swelled by newly imported Africans; these, when they die, cannot be replaced by the same means, and during their lives they continue addicted to irregular habits and a course of life unfavourable to the multiplication of their species. It is only when the native Africans are extinct, that the experiment whether the numbers can be kept up upon a plantation cultivated by slaves, can be fairly tried, with a creole race.

Objection 15. *Instances are still frequent of immoderate punishments of slaves.*

A. No: they must not be alleged to be frequent. They occur occasionally, but rarely; as do cases of oppressive and brutal treatment of apprentices in England. The instances of in-

jurious treatment of slaves in the colonies are all recorded; they seldom fail of being brought forward in debate, and enforced with an exaggerated eloquence. Are they numerous? or, where they have been marked by extraordinary violence or insensibility to suffering, are they recent? "It is impossible," says a writer distinguished equally by his ability and fairness, "to deny that the severity of the master has diminished." There has been, and is still, in progress, "a benign though insensible revolution in opinion and manners."

There is abundant and unexceptionable testimony to these facts; but till any of them are controverted, to avoid prolixity, a little matter in the way of confirmation will suffice.

What are, shortly, the expressed sentiments of the bishops, regular clergy, dissenting ministers, governors, generals, admirals, staff and other officers, and civilians; themselves quite disinterested, but possessing the necessary opportunities of personal observation?

BISHOPS AND REGULAR CLERGY.

Extract of a Letter from the Bishop of Jamaica to Lord Bathurst, dated March 12, 1825.

"I am very happy in being able to assure your lordship, that a very general wish to ame-

liorate the condition of the slaves, and to instruct them in the principles of the established church, seems to pervade the great mass of proprietors; and every facility is afforded me of visiting the several plantations."

Extract. From the same to the same. Sept. 16, 1825.

"" I have the highest satisfaction in being able to assure your lordship, that the same good feeling which I had the pleasure to communicate upon a former occasion, with regard to Kingston, continues to animate every part of the island which I have hitherto visited. The general result of our observations" (the bishop's and Mr. Archdeacon Pope's) " has been a hearty desire on the part of the proprietors generally, or their representatives, cheerfully to promote, as far as their limited means will allow, any measures which I have thought it my duty to suggest for the benefit of the church. Public meetings have been called in many parishes, and private subscriptions entered into, to promote the same desirable object."

From the same to the same. Feb. 20, 1826.

" I have lately visited the eastern and northern parishes of the island, and I am happy

to announce to your lordship a growing disposition for the institution of Sunday and parochial schools, which experience proves to be the only efficient means of instructing the slave and coloured population."

From the same to the same. Sept. 1, 1826.

After speaking of the "recent establishment of a large Sunday school by private contributions," and soliciting the aid of his Majesty's Treasury to the erection of an additional place of worship, the bishop concludes as follows: "It is my sincere conviction that any seeming backwardness in carrying into effect recommendations of this nature, and having for their object the instruction and improvement of the lower classes of the people, arises, in the present state of this colony, from a want of means rather than of inclination."

Extracts of Letters from the Bishop of Barbadoes to Lord Bathurst.

Oct. 7, 1825.

"I have the honour to inform your lordship that on visiting the several islands within my diocese I was received throughout with every mark of public and private respect, accompanied with the assurance, on the part of the respective

legislatures and proprietors, of their readiness to co-operate with me, to the utmost extent of their means, in the measures which I had the honour to propose."

Oct. 31, 1825.

"I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of requesting your lordship's attention to the report from the parish of St. Lucy, Barbadoes. All of the plantations, with scarcely an exception, are stated to be, and many to have been for a long time, under religious instruction. I trust, my lord, that, under the divine blessing, the time is not far distant, when, through an increase of clergy and catechists, a similar report may be made from every parish within my diocese."

November 5, 1825.

"I trust that your lordship will regard this liberal grant (£2000 currency a-year for the parish of St. Michael, and £1000 currency a-year to every other parish in the island) as a further proof of the good disposition existing in the island of Barbadoes (and I may, with truth, add, in every other island within my diocese) to extend and place on a more effectual footing the several means of religious instruction."

January 27, 1827.

"Your lordship will be particularly glad to hear that the feelings in Tobago towards myself, and the measures which I proposed, were every thing which I could have wished, and that the system of catechetical instruction is gaining ground in every island."

Extract of a Letter from the Rev. J. Mann, rector of Kingston, to the Bishop of Jamaica, dated October 14, 1825.

"The aggregate number of persons confirmed by your lordship on the 3rd, 4th, and 6th days of October, 1825, in this city, is seven hundred and eighty-six. There were about one hundred and six white persons; the others were of colour and blacks."

RELIGIOUS PERSONS.—DISSENTING MINISTER.

The Wesleyan Missionary at Dominica, Mr. Catts.

"That gentleman gave a very favourable account of this island (Dominica), and represented the prospect through all the remaining islands as bright and cheering to a degree never before witnessed in this part of the world.

From all the planters, except those of the Roman Catholic persuasion, the ministers of religion were now meeting the greatest encouragement and support, and the negro character was rapidly undergoing a most salutary change. The French slaves, however, were in a most debased state, ignorant and brutal; those belonging to English masters were a little more cultivated: all were baptized; a few married; many were taught; and much was hoped from the new school, just established, where children of all kinds and colours attended. The slaves were yet far from being in a state fit for freedom, and such a measure would be injurious to them; but they were in a course of mental and moral improvement, and, with a few exceptions, as will always be the case, there was a kindly feeling towards them on the part of the owners."—*Third Report of the Commissioners of Legal Inquiry*, p. 5.

GOVERNOR AND MILITARY OFFICER.—GENERAL.

Extract from Lord Combermere's Address to the Legislature of Barbadoes, 1818.

"During my visits to the other West India islands, as commander of the forces, I have taken great pains personally to inform myself

respecting the actual treatment of slaves; and it was with the most sincere pleasure and gratification that I observed, almost universally, the greatest attention paid by planters to their domestic comforts, and the proper regulation of the labours of their slaves, &c."

GOVERNOR AND NAVAL OFFICER.—ADMIRAL.

Extract from the Address of Sir Charles Brisbane to the Assembly of St. Vincent. 1823.

"From a residence of nearly fifteen years in this colony, I am happy to bear testimony to the kind and careful treatment of the slaves by every proprietor here."

MILITARY OFFICERS.

Abstract of some of the examinations on oath, taken before the Council of Barbadoes, under a Commission granted by the Governor, for the purpose of ascertaining the actual condition of the Slave Population, early in 1823.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Edward Williams, K. C. B., Commandant of the Garrison,

Has been resident in Barbadoes upwards of eight months, and has had opportunities of ob-

serving the general treatment of the slaves, having purposely sought them, from an impression when he left England, that the slaves were badly treated in the colonies. Has visited plantations and hospitals; found the latter particularly attended to, and the young slaves well fed and treated; and firmly believes that, generally speaking, they are better off than the poor in England. Has observed that every family has a cottage, some poultry, a pig, &c. Firmly believes that a cruel owner of slaves would be held in the same abhorrence here, as he would be in England.

Dr. Tegart, Inspector of Hospitals,

Has been resident upwards of two years; has not had frequent opportunities of observing the treatment of slaves; on one estate looked minutely into their condition, when that great number of slaves appeared to him to be well managed and comfortably taken care of. Has seen several others, but only superficially; when the external appearance gave him reason to think they were very comfortable. Has observed upon several of the estates their hospitals are very well conducted for the care of the sick. Came to Barbadoes prepossessed that the negroes were very harshly used, from what he

had heard and read: now finds that it is not so, and believes that they are generally kindly and well treated; they appear to him better off than the labouring people in his own country (Ireland). Generally speaking, the slaves seem very contented. Decidedly thinks that a cruel master would be held in abhorrence.

Lt.-Col. Popham, Quarter-Master-General,

Has been resident in this island upwards of seven years; has had frequent opportunities of observing the treatment of slaves, and has reason to suppose, from his own observations, that the slaves are well treated; has been in every parish in the island, and verily believes that the slaves are a happy and contented people, generally speaking. They appear cheerful in the performance of their work; does not recollect witnessing any severity practised upon them in the fields. The greater proportion of the houses of these people appeared comfortable, having the advantages of poultry, pigs, and goats, and in many instances fruit-trees and a little garden: the Sunday markets demonstrate that they enjoy the benefit arising from the produce and sale thereof. Great attention is paid to the rearing of children, and the old and infirm receive the kindest attention.

Very few blacks are beggars, whereas the white population exhibits frequent instances, proving that the slaves are much better off, having no care or thought for the morrow, feeling confident that all their wants and comforts will be provided for.

Lt.-Col. Berkely, Deputy Adjutant-General,

Has been resident in Barbadoes with some interruptions since 1806. Has not had an opportunity of observing the condition of slaves in the country, from his professional duties confining him to the vicinity of the town. From what he could observe, the negroes appear to be as contented as any other labouring classes in any part of the world. Within the last few months has had an opportunity, for the first time, of seeing something of the interior detail of an estate, and, in his opinion, the system established was, as far as the preservation of discipline required, too lenient, and he has no doubt the same system very generally prevails among the respectable class of owners. Thinks that a cruel slave owner would be held in abhorrence here, as in England.

Captain Cruttenden, Royal Artillery, Major of Brigade,

Has been resident ten years. Has very fre-

quently had opportunities of observing the treatment of slaves on a great number of estates, for weeks and months at a time. Has observed the kind treatment they receive, and the cheerfulness with which they perform their duty. Was never witness to an act of cruelty or oppression, during the above period. Declares (what he has frequently asserted), that he considers them a much more happy race, better clothed and enjoying more comforts than the poor in that part of Ireland (Cork), where he was for a short time stationed.

Captain Spink, Aide-de-Camp to the Commander of the Forces,

Has been resident two years. Has had frequent opportunities of observing the treatment of slaves upon estates, which have led him to form an opinion that great humanity and kindness are shown to the slave population of Barbadoes. His opinion is, that they are a happy and contented people, and do not consider themselves as oppressed and ill-treated. His reasons for forming this opinion are, that they are always cheerful and happy, and appear to be sensible of the great care taken of them. Certainly thinks that a cruel slave owner would

be regarded with the same abhorrence in this colony, as in England.

Civilian, (unconnected with the colonies.) Former Secretary to the Governor of Grenada.

The colonial Master in Chancery said — "I acted as secretary to General Maitland from June 1808, to the time he went to England, in 1809; and again from 1810 to 1811. I was also secretary to General Ainslie for eight or ten months; so to General Shipley. I also acted as secretary to President Harvey. It is astonishing the reduced number of punishments, and improved treatment of the negroes, within the last few years, since the Abolition Act. They are infinitely better treated, better clothed, and better fed; but there is room for improvement still."—First Report of the Commissioners of Legal Inquiry, pp. 101—110.

Chief Justice Wylley, St. Vincent.

Informed the Commissioners that "he believed slaves in this island were generally well treated. A free, white man, who has no money," said he, "may plead his own cause as well as he can, while the humblest of our slaves is entitled, in such cases, to the assistance of counsel, retained for him at the expense of the colony. To be sure," said the same gentleman, "slaves are sold like

cattle; but with whom does the blame lie?"—Second Report, &c.

Mr. Woodley, Attorney-General of St. Kitts.

"The sentiments which appear formerly to have prevailed regarding that class have, in a great measure, given way to the efforts of humanity, and the appeals to religion and justice which have been made in their behalf; an improved sense is now entertained very generally of what is due to them as men and fellow-subjects," &c.

Answer, No. 20, by the overseer of a plantation in Jamaica, to queries addressed to him by the Lord Bishop of Jamaica:—

"Having been twenty years in this island, I am able to say, from experience, that the treatment of slaves is greatly improved—less labour is exacted from them, they have larger allowances of clothing, &c. than formerly, more time to cultivate their provisions, much less punishment is necessary, and a stricter attention is paid to whatever adds to their comfort and happiness, whether in sickness or in health. This great amelioration in their treatment, the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, more facility in attending public worship, and of resting on the Sabbath-day, have all tended to improve the

negro character, and to raise them in the scale of morality and civilization. When there are none but creoles on estates, I am certain there will be a great improvement in the population, morals, and general behaviour of the slaves. —(Q. 13.) I have no doubt an industrious negro sells at least 10*l.* worth of ground provisions yearly, besides what he makes by hogs and poultry."—(Q. 5.)

So much for what has been called the "often repeated and often refuted pretence of actual improvement!"

Is there, then, progressive advancement, the existence of an improved moral feeling, in our colonies? For, if the colonist can satisfy the Parliament and people of England, that he is doing, I will only say, *well*, at present, he may protest, with considerable effect, against all mischievous meddling and rage of interference. It was a maxim of one of the Grecian sages that "the better was the enemy of the good;" and the same sentiment is embodied in the homely, vernacular, expression, "leave well alone." Even where all is not absolutely good, a rash spirit of change is still to be deprecated. How little has yet been gained to the cause of humanity by the famous Abolition Act; owing,

principally, to that great measure having been precipitated. Not one good result has it been attended with, that I am aware of, to the wretched Africans, still expatriated by thousands with more than the renewed horrors of the middle passage; except, indeed, as there is reason to believe, the condition of the slave in any colony in the West Indies to be preferable to that of the African in his native country. Not that I would be understood to derogate from that great act of national justice. Nor would I be supposed to question its expediency; except in so far as it was undertaken suddenly, and without concert with other nations, and with no guarantees for their reciprocal forbearance. On the contrary, I consider the preservation of the islands to the present time, as well as their acknowledged improvement, to be in a great measure owing to that noble and disinterested, but at the same time wise and conservative measure. If the influx of Africans into the West Indies had continued much longer, at the same prodigious rate as in the years immediately preceding the abolition, the preponderance of the black over the white population of the colonies, now excessive, would have become overwhelming and destructive. It is from the era of the abolition of the slave trade that civilization and

improvement (notwithstanding the incurable vice of absenteeism) has dawned upon the West Indies. "The severity of the planter has progressively diminished, in proportion as the slave has advanced from the state of an indignant and rebellious captive, to that of a domiciliated and tranquil bondsman." It was the newly-imported African who required to be coerced and treatedwith severity. When the importation was at an end, the master, in order to promote the increase, attended to the comforts of his (creole) slaves. Then, as was sure to be the case, when all the better and kinder feelings of our nature were brought into exercise, the masters themselves partook of the advantage, and entered upon a career of improvement. Their progress has since been rapid, and its traces are every where discoverable; except, indeed, to the averted eye of the anti-colonist. Look at the talent, the eloquence, the parliamentary tact, the business-like habits, the regular proceedings, displayed by the legislatures of some of the principal colonies in their present contest with the parent state! Do not these indicate an intellectual power, never before developed in these islands? This circumstance alone, affords a sure test of the great comparative improvement. Will our own accomplished

debaters—will Messrs. Brougham and Denman, Wilberforce and Buxton, impugn these doctrines? I believe not.

What is the result? That slavery in our colonies has been greatly softened—that it exists at present in the mildest form; but that there remain certain evils, inseparable almost from the condition of slavery.

But it will be said, and I shall assent to the observation, that, supposing slavery to be greatly mitigated, and, admitting what has now been urged, to have gone far to establish that point, still it is not intended that slavery should be perpetual. The two Houses of Parliament, by their resolutions, stand pledged to its extinction. The state of slavery is eventually to be got rid of; and this must be taken as a settled point, not open to discussion or question. Be it so! "The House of Commons," I am aware, "looks forward to its determination, at the earliest period, compatible with the well-being of the slaves themselves, with the safety of the colonies, and with the fair and equitable consideration of the interests of private property."

In what way, is this determination of the state of slavery to be brought about; by what means effected? In another place and character I have said, by encouraging, 1st, voluntary; and

2dly, constructive manumissions: the former, by removing every expense or difficulty with which they are at present attended; the latter, by a benignant interpretation of the laws respecting freedom: the identical, and be it observed, the only modes resorted to (*g*) in old Rome, and in Old England, for the attainment of the same object; it never occurring to their legislators (profound as they were, and even astute to discover and avail themselves of every handle in favour of liberty) (*h*) to pass laws in a matter of property, operating *in invitos*, and without providing compensation. This, however, is

2d. The remedy proposed—the compulsory manumission clause being the effective part of the scheme devised to secure the extinction of slavery. Yet, conformably with the resolutions of Parliament, and regarding their true and genuine spirit, the operation of that measure could never have been intended to be immediate. It must have been meant to take effect remotely, though less tardily (*i*) than the course of voluntary and constructive manumissions. By a determined, and be it observed, *persevering*, but at the same time judicious and temperate enforcement of certain measures (namely, measures of amelioration, not even now established in more than

one colony, and not then in existence), the House of Commons *looked forward* to a *progressive* improvement in the slave population; such as might *prepare* them for a participation in civil rights. The House was only anxious for the *accomplishment* of this *purpose* at the earliest period compatible with the well-being of the slaves themselves, &c. &c.—(See the resolution ante.) Now, looking at the choice, and, as it has been said, the collocation of words in this resolution, is it not apparent that what the House was *to look forward to* could not have been immediately under its nose; that what was to be *progressive*, and attained by *perseverance*, was not to be disposed of, *currente calamo;* that what required *preparation, judgment, and temper*, was not merely the composition of the next despatch? No, sir; it was far otherwise. It was felt, and virtually admitted, that the slave was not fit for freedom in his present state: a period was to be allowed for his gradual improvement; he was to be carefully prepared for a great moral change—to be studiously trained—to be slowly formed—for the enjoyment of freedom, and the admission to civil rights. Who could have believed that, with all this prospective care, this "preparation," "progression," "perseverance," "care

for well-being," "safety," and "equitable consideration of property," in two short months, before the ameliorating measures were introduced in a single colony (into the only one in which they are yet completely in force), before their operation commenced, nay, at the same time, and *uno flatu*, with their recommendation, the measure of emancipation, without the master's concurrence, and to the prejudice of his creditor, would have commenced? Who could have supposed that the whole to be required, would be the price of the slave (however procured), without regard to the assent of the master, without regard to its probable effect on private property, without regard to the fitness of the slave for a participation in civil rights, and without any effectual security that the money, with which the freedom is purchased, should be honest acquisitions, the fruit of regulated industry? "It is time, and time only," says the author of 'The West India Question practically considered,' "that can dispose of the question of the possibility of substituting free labour for slave labour." And he then proceeds to show that, in a given case, of the experiment being pressed upon a master, and his being called upon to part with a slave, for whose services he could not find a substitute, the price

of the slave must be the price of a definite proportion of the planter's estate. But why is the "experiment to be *pressed* on?" Why call upon the master before "time *has* disposed of the question?"

Besides this ground of opposition to the clause in question, (that its operation may commence immediately, without awaiting the contemplated improvement in the character of the slave population), many other objections have been urged, equally powerful, and, as it appears to me, quite insuperable.

Such are the complaints:—

That it is not conceived in the true spirit of the resolutions, which look with equal eye to the well-being of the slave and the interests of the master: *it* regards only the advantage of the slave, without a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of private property.

That it does not look to the extinction of slavery by the same unexceptionable means, as before put an end to slavery in England. That it does not look to an emancipation, of which the master is to be the willing instrument; or, indeed, any instrument at all. That it gives the slave a direct inducement to enter upon a demoralizing course of life, to debase his character, in order to lower his value. That from

the moment when all the effective people on an estate, (taken at one third of the whole gang) may be subtracted from the number of hands employed in the cultivation and manufacture of sugar, on payment of a sum of money, fixed by others, the injury to the master is direct and immediate, while his compensation is contingent and doubtful,—matter of implication and inference, collected from the resolutions not expressed by them, and at the best, altogether undefined.

That the services of such slaves, so withdrawn, cannot be replaced by other slaves, or by free-labourers; and, indeed, the place of some operatives, such as boilers, who require long practice to learn the art of making sugar, cannot be replaced at all.

That, consequently, from the operation of this clause, the planter's crops will be diminished, and in the end, his estate ruined.

That the condition of the slave in the meantime will not be bettered by his prematurely becoming free; as from his repugnance to all sorts of labour, and the effect of a tropical climate, which makes a state of repose the highest object of gratified ambition, he will fall into a listless torpor at first, and in a little time lead the life of a savage in the woods.

That, in fine, the manumission clause is not only oppressive and unnecessary, but futile and impracticable; corresponding precisely with what Mr. Fox predicted of any measure to emancipate the slaves, undertaken without the consent and concurrent feeling of all parties concerned, that it must be "not only mischievous in its consequences, but totally extravagant in its conception, as well as impracticable in its execution."

The only reply made to these overwhelming objections has been that there is no foundation for such excessive alarm; that the purchase of manumissions by the agricultural slaves from the fruits of honest industry (when it is reduced to these) will rarely happen: an admission which, it appears to me, serves to show that the scheme of compulsory manumission, however specious (and I was one of the persons first captivated by it), is illusory. Again, it is said, that as the number of slaves brought to market diminishes, the prices which they fetch will continue to advance, and so there will be no injustice to the master. But if the price is thus to rise with the increase of manumissions, it will be soon beyond the possible reach of the slave, and the system must cease to work.

Another and more important question re-

mains—if the proposed measure be not so unwarrantable an interference, so direct an invasion of private property, as to require compensation—*on the instant.* There, the colonial members of the court of policy at Demerara, (see M. Van Berckell's speech), and the committees of the legislatures of the islands, neither unreasonably nor unwisely, take their stand. I enter not into the practicability of free labour at a future period, influenced as that decision must always be, by a consideration of the then existing circumstances. I avoid entangling the subject in the labyrinths of political economy. It seems to me sufficient ground for the resistance of the colonists at the present time, *that the experiment is new and hazardous; that the result is doubtful; that the attempt at substituting free labour for the services of the slave may be unsuccessful; that in case of failure the mischief is irreparable; that for such irretrievable injury no compensation is provided, or as yet unequivocally pledged; that all experience is against its success; that, with the fullest opportunities afforded, and the most pressing invitations given, no evidence was, or could be, adduced in its favour.* "Among the numerous cases of manumission to the present time," says the joint report of the council and assembly at St. Vincent,

" we have been unable to trace in this colony a solitary instance of an agricultural slave obtaining his freedom, and remaining for wages, or any other consideration, at his original occupation on a sugar estate. Nor do we think that any reasonable compensation in the shape of money wages would induce one of them, at the present moment, to return to the continuous although not onerous labour, necessary for the cultivation and manufacture of sugar. If this be the fact, and we challenge inquiry into and disproof of it, if possible, what prospect would the unfortunate planter in St. Vincent have before him, but that of depopulation of his once valuable estate, and consequent ruin to himself and family?" " The council and assembly do not wish to contend that the day will never arrive, when these enactments may be reasonably and usefully applied. Another generation of slaves may safely participate in these advantages," &c.

Let me not, however, be understood as asserting, (what is by no means the case,) that the proposed measure of compulsory manumission, so objectionable in the first instance, was not greatly qualified in its progress. It was indeed very materially altered in its very nature and essence, when it was distinctly laid

down, as a clear and irrefragable principle, that the valuation to be taken, included not merely the value of the slaves, but a fair estimate also of the loss which the owner might sustain, by the act of manumission. But it is denied by the colonists to be possible to fix a just principle of full compensation, and particularly with a view to existing contracts. They say that it is not practicable, at the period when slaves first obtain their manumission, to make a fair estimate of the future deterioration and final loss, which may result from the sudden deprivation of an experienced and efficient slave. A second principle has been also introduced into the orders equally an improvement, viz.—that manumission should be the result and reward of habitual industry; that the boon conferred on the slave should be a right to purchase his freedom with the fruits of his honest earnings. It was also admitted advantageously, that a slave duly convicted of larceny should be incapacitated from purchasing his freedom, at least for a certain number of years. This latter provision, too, the Berbice order has very considerably, if not objectionably, extended: "And provided also, that nothing shall extend, or be considered to extend, to entitle any such slave or slaves to purchase his, her, or their freedom

as aforesaid, where the slave or slaves proposed to be manumitted shall have been convicted of larceny, or shall have suffered corporal punishment under the sentence of any court of competent jurisdiction, within the period of seven years next preceding his, her, or their application for manumission as aforesaid." With this order, wrung with difficulty from the planter, the anti-colonist is discontented.

If the proposed remedy then, (the measure of compulsory manumission,) is wholly inefficacious—if the securities offered to the planter, while they leave him dissatisfied and gloomy, are more than sufficient to render the orders in council impotent, and even ridiculous, in the eyes of his opponents, what is to be done? Cannot the pledge given in the resolutions of Parliament be redeemed? Must slavery be perpetual?

Not if the mother country is sincere in her professions; not if common error is to be atoned by common sacrifices! If, indeed, humanity be only a name—if the liberality, so frequently invoked, is meant to be only at the expense of others—if lofty professions, and loud and animated appeals, involve no sacrifices, import no self-denial, cost nothing, profit nothing—then slavery may be eternal! If, on the other hand, the numerous petitions to the British

legislature on this most interesting subject were spontaneous, the genuine burst of national feeling, from a spring perennial and pure, the streams of an enlarged beneficence must be expected to flow unfailingly. Then may "a great moral revolution be effected;" then may "slavery be extinguished by the least exceptionable means, without ruin or revulsion to the master or the slave!"

What then is to be done?—Abandon the remedy proposed, because it is inadequate. In the withdrawing, or even in the failure of the measure of compulsory manumission, there is no humiliation or disgrace. I am ready to avow my own mistake. It was recommended by myself, in general terms, when proposing a new slave code for all the islands (code noir), I added, "with an infusion of the Spanish cedulas." It was a scheme of promise; but there is much to dislike in the machinery, and it does not seem calculated to work well. Above all, it is inadequate.

What then is, thirdly, THE REMEDY REQUIRED?

The slave, it seems now fully admitted, is not prepared and qualified for freedom in his present state. Religious instruction—mental cultivation—the elevation and improvement of the

moral character of the negro—emancipation from the chains of ignorance, superstition, and vice, ought manifestly to precede the mere corporal manumission of the slave. This indeed is in strict conformity with both the letter and the spirit, of the resolutions of Parliament.

Manumission, therefore, upon a large scale should not take place immediately; yet it seems desirable that a period should be fixed for it, remote perhaps, but certain and indefeasible; compensation being at the same time, by the most effectual means, secured to the master. Thus would this distressing question at length be set at rest. The mode of providing and securing indemnity to the master justly takes precedence of the course to be pursued in the interval, or indeed, eventually, with the slave.

The question then, should be determined by declaring freedom in the slave at some distant period, with certain reasonable conditions annexed, having first secured, by effectual provisions (equivalent to an actual vote of the money), a full compensation to the master. In the mean time, slaves should be attached to the soil, as the first step of improvement, and a day, or half day, according to the circumstances, should be bought, to enable them to hold their market, so as to leave Sunday de-

voted to religious observances and instruction. I am prepared to find the mention of *a grant of money* at first very unfavourably received. I shall frankly state, that it is certainly a startling proposition to those who are at all aware of the amount of this valuable property, even at the most moderate computation; but particularly so, when the finances of the parent state are supposed to be in a somewhat depressed, or deranged, condition. But some considerations will be presently suggested, calculated to mitigate this alarm, and to reconcile, I hope, even you, sir, to the belief of its practicability.

The slave being confessedly not apt for freedom in his present state, a certain period, it is agreed, must be allowed for preparing him for the transition, and fitting him for a participation in those civil rights enjoyed by other classes of his majesty's subjects. Let us suppose this period, so left indeterminate, to be taken at a quarter of a century, and that during that time the compulsory clauses should be abandoned, and the colonists secured from all further molestation and vexatious interference. I do not suppose that, at the present crisis of reduced returns and ruined prospects of the West Indians, slaves would be valued at many

years' purchase. I assume, therefore, that after twenty-five years of quiet enjoyment under the circumstances I am about to mention, the reversion might be purchased, in most cases, on pretty easy terms. Again, if the conditions, recommended to be annexed to the grant of freedom, embraced the performance of certain duties, as cultivation of the soil, manufacture of sugar, &c. for a certain time, at moderate and stated wages (out of which the rent for the negro's cottage and land would have to be deducted), such regulations might avail very considerably, in reducing the value of the reversionary interest.

If I am asked to point out the practicable "ways and means" of effecting this acknowledged good, to invade your province, sir, and show the productive fund, I shall not evade the difficulty, as Lord Chatham did, when pressed by Mr. Grenville, by dwelling on the doleful burden, "tell me where,—gentle shepherd, tell me *where?*"—but, with the earnestness and sincerity due to a momentous subject, point out, to the best of my ability, the available resources.

First, then, I would humbly suggest (not daring to ask the permission, but meekly imploring the pardon of the Chancellor of the Exchequer), that the object might be in a great measure

effected, by a partial remission of the sugar duties, during this period of a quarter of a century.

Secondly, I would respectfully offer to his appeased consideration, that for the purchase of the reversion in slaves, after twenty-five years of unmolested labour, unrestrained production, and unfettered traffic, with the duty on sugar reduced (dare I say it?) one half; a vote of four or five millions might, perhaps, be adequate, for the intended purpose.

Thirdly, that such grant of four or five millions should be invested in Parliamentary Commissioners, with full power to dispose of the same, most advantageously for the objects in view, reporting their proceedings annually; —all such reports to be laid before the House of Commons.

Fourthly, that a saving would ultimately, though I admit, remotely accrue, very considerable in a pecuniary, and very important in a moral point of view, from the reduction of the military establishments at present necessary on these unhealthy stations; when the black population, become interested in the soil and participant of civil blessings, should grow, by degrees, to be safely trusted to form a national militia for the defence of the islands.

Fifthly, that at a period, also distant, but not

the less certain, an increased market will be opened for our home manufactures, by a dense population converted into a flourishing peasantry, with successful mechanics and coloured tradesmen acquiring artificial wants as they occasionally rise in the scale of society.

Lastly, need I mention, to a vigilant and prudent government, the advancement of the shipping interest, consequent upon improved agriculture and extended commerce in the (*k*) colonies?

But it must not be concealed that it would be further necessary, in order to obviate a difficulty, of a serious nature, which presents itself upon the threshold, to adopt a considerable extension of the plan. The proprietor has seldom a free control over his estate. Few plantations are unencumbered with debt, and the debt itself obstructs improvement. It would be necessary, therefore, that the commissioners intrusted with the disposal of the grant before mentioned should be empowered to buy up the debt, where it could be advantageously purchased. If I am asked whether I believe such measure could be effected; speaking as a very humble individual, I answer, I believe it could. All reflecting men connected with the colonies, now perceive the risk and difficulty of their situation. All are,

or ought to be, prepared to make sacrifices; the planter, because he has either an interest strictly nominal, or holds by the most precarious of tenures; the merchant, because he would be often too happy to receive a moiety of his demand to get rid of his enormous advances; the government, to secure its sources of revenue,—its customs, duties, imports, exports, and the inauspicious four and a half per cent. Whether the planter were assisted by the loan of money (the better mode) to pay off his mortgage or judgment debt, or the government agent stood in the place of the mortgagee, charging a more moderate interest, and a less exorbitant commission, it would alike be competent to the government to make what reasonable terms it pleased for the progressive improvement of the slaves, till they were fit for complete and absolute freedom. So, indeed, in the event of the purchase of the reversionary interest in slaves after a given period, stipulations would, of course, be introduced, for their amelioration and instruction during the term. What indeed obstructs these improvements now?—the debt! What creates the impediment, at present existing, to the measure of attaching slaves to the soil?—the merchant's demand. What is in the way of giving the

slaves another day to cultivate their provision grounds?—the bond, the judgment, the mortgage deed. What checks the manumission of slaves for good behaviour, length of service, number of children?—the obligation to the creditor. Upon this part of the subject, I am gratified to find that I have the full concurrence of Mr. Mathison, whose work, the fruit of extreme good sense, long experience, and practical knowledge of the subject, I have only recently met with. He anticipates me, I find, in this recommendation, of which he points out other advantages; as, for instance, that the system of free trade would be greatly promoted by such a measure. "Assist the planter," says he, "by loans of money to discharge the mortgage debt, then there immediately arises a new order of things, and the way is fairly laid open for the operation of a liberal system in the trade of those colonies. It may be confidently stated that one million sterling money would be more than sufficient for this valuable work."

A period then being allowed for fitting the slave for freedom, and such period being ascertained and fixed at a quarter of a century, and the means and mode of indemnifying the master having been duly considered, it remains to inquire into the disposal of the slaves at the

determination of such period, and their treatment intermediately. It is natural to suppose that, previous to any dealing for the reversionary interest in slaves, a mutual understanding would be come to, what should be the plan of instruction, the opportunities afforded, the preparation entered on,—in a word, the course pursued. The measures of improvement settled, strong laws should be framed to enforce these regulations, and efficient courts created, to secure the execution of such laws.

First, then, let the government begin with a solemn and explicit declaration of its intentions, making known its real and final determination, prescribing the intended course, with its exact limits and end. All slaves should, at the same time, be declared subjects of the king, and under his protection and that of the common law, and attached to estates from that day; and in return for the protection afforded them by his majesty's government, required to pay obedience to the proprietor of the estate to which they belong, under certain regulations and restrictions to be promulgated. When they are freed, after a stated period, it should be with certain conditions annexed, of cultivating the soil, and manufacturing the staple of the country, on receiving fixed allowances, and

they should then be called plantation labourers. I say, on receiving certain allowances, because, at this period, it will be politic to foster local attachments, in order to detain them on estates, and to give them, as much as possible, a common interest and actual sympathy with the master. With this view, it is desirable (I am supposing their evil habits eradicated, and their moral character improved) that they should be paid for their services in produce; in other words, should receive a proportion of the crop. Cultivating the soil, partly for their own benefit, they will become interested in the maintenance of order, and be less capable, and, what is of no slight importance, less suspected, of designs to subvert the established institutions of the colony; for they will have acquired, what has been called, a stake in the country. Then, as they advance from barbarism to civilization, in a course marked by moral improvement,—marry, have families, find motives to exertion, and acquire habits of industry, the experiment (I cannot call it the system) of free labour, the probationary term expired, will come in due order to receive a trial, under the most favourable auspices.

When the political economist contends that no free person in a tropical climate will labour

so hard as is necessary for the production of sugar without some stimulus, compulsion, or coercion, *physical or moral,* he is perfectly correct in his facts, and equally philosophical in his reasonings. But let the less skilful disputant beware of a topic involving dangerous concessions. Where is the colonist prepared to admit that the labour of the present cultivator of the soil is excessive and painful; that he performs it sullenly and with the utmost repugnance; that, according to some of the distorted pictures I have seen of West India slavery, it is only got out of him "at the smack of the whip?" Will he not rather contend that a "child of the sun," adapted to bear the heat by his frame and temperament, to the negro, the toil is comparatively light, that in ordinary cases he performs it without depression of spirits, and in crop time with cheerfulness?—Undoubtedly the state most agreeable to the mere animal, man, in a tropical climate, is a state of repose. Climate certainly has great influence upon both whites and blacks: labour in the daytime is painful: the European is prone to *ennui;* the African falls asleep, as he dresses you or waits at table. But when the moral character of the negro is gradually elevated; when to his strong local attachments, is added the sweet flow of the natural affec-

tions; when, with the force of example and excited emulation, the innate love of improvement and order begins to develop itself; when, with confirmed habits of industry, comes the delight in the acquisition of property, the love of the pleasures, the comforts, the consideration and consequence, that money can command; —then, and certainly I believe, not before, the desire of bettering the condition, which nakedly and in the abstract, is too feeble a motive to rouse the savage to exertion, will operate powerfully upon the neophyte, and be it remembered, with a force constantly increasing, as he advances in his progress to civilization. What has been the result of the first application of a *moral* stimulus—the experiment of task-work? I can confidently answer, from the highest authority, as established by daily experience, that, in those colonies where task-work obtains, the labour is performed with the greatest ease and alacrity.

Thus by slow degrees, and cautious steps of improvement, may these unfortunate bondsmen be safely converted into an industrious, virtuous, and contented peasantry, as the *villeins en gros* and *villeins regardant* of our early history, were turned into English copyholders; while, by extinguishing bad passions, and absurd and hate-

ful prejudices among the whites, the coloured people may be raised into a flourishing middle order; furnishing together, in process of time, a powerful force, for the defence of each colony, consuming numerous articles of dress and *bijouterie*, and creating new markets for our depressed manufactures. If the people of colour, increasing in commercial enterprise and success, should extend their territorial acquisitions, purchase by degrees the principal properties of the islands, and become eventually the chief, or indeed the sole, proprietors of the soil, I should look upon such an event as the *euthanasia* of the British West Indies!

As to the measures of amelioration, and the course to be pursued to prepare the slave for ultimate freedom, other difficulties surmounted, I do not anticipate any very serious difference of opinion. Supposing the compulsory manumission clause to be abandoned, I do not think that there exists any general or strong disinclination in the colonists to adopt the greater part of the remaining regulations recommended to them from England; subject of course to some essential modifications, rendered necessary in different islands by local circumstances. They are, indeed, for the most part, I have no hesi-

tation in saying, unquestionable improvements. Yet may the objections of the colonists in particular instances, or to specific enactments, be quite reasonable and well founded. For example, the council of St. Lucia say, " One suggestion alone have they considered themselves bound to reject; that by which it is required that the property of a slave, dying intestate, and without lawful heirs, should revert to the crown, to the prejudice of the owner. A few months since, the whole of the property which now belongs to a slave, belonged by law to the owner. This, they have voluntarily, and in the most ample manner, given up, having declared, in unequivocal terms, that, in all that relates to the acquirement, administration, or disposal of his private property, the slave was, with the single exception under consideration, to be declared free. All these sacrifices they have made *for the slave's interest;* further they do not think themselves warranted in going; they cannot conscientiously consent to a modification and consequent sacrifice of property with reference to which *the principle that has influenced them throughout their labours, no longer applies.*"

The court of policy at Demerara justifies its

reluctance to grant to the slave the right of holding property in land, having declared him competent "to purchase, acquire, possess, hold, enjoy, alienate, or dispose of money, cattle, implements or utensils of husbandry, or household furniture, or other effects of such like nature," because (*inter alia*) "of the consequent liability to imprisonment for taxes and other charges." "There would," they say, "be a well grounded expectation that the master would pay the debt, in order to recover his services; and thus the master would, in point of fact, become liable for the debts of his slave."

The council and assembly of St. Vincent object to "so unconstitutional a measure as placing the disposal of their entire property in the hands of a single judge and protector. In questions of property, they say, as well as of life, British subjects have been taught to believe in the necessity, or rely on the efficacy, of the interposition of a jury."

The council and assembly of Tobago are outraged, at the proposed penalty on a person a second time convicted of unlawfully punishing a slave. The former observe: "Laws should have penalties proportioned to the moral guilt contracted in the breach of them; but in this

instance the moral guilt may be so small, while the penalty attached is so monstrous, that your committee think no sane legislator, cognizant of the subject, could, for a moment, think of connecting them together." The latter say, through their speaker: "The offence, at the utmost, can be no more than assault and battery; but we venture to assert, it is the first time in the history of legislation, since it became a science, that it ever entered into the contemplation of a statesman to punish such an offence with a confiscation of all a man's property."

But, assuming the measures recommended to be all of them improvements, and supposing the improvements adopted in every island, and at last, passed into a law: however sound in principle,—however calculated to be salutary in practice,—however just or necessary these enactments,—they would wholly fail of their effect. I hazard this prediction of the future from an attentive consideration of the past. The best laws will avail nothing without a due execution. There is now a defective administration. The reformation, I take the liberty of saying, (not dogmatically but decidedly), has hitherto begun at the wrong end. It is first necessary to

provide strong, efficient, independent courts of justice; then carefully to revise and amend the laws. In reconstructing the latter, the cardinal point is to look to the operative principle; to frame laws that will execute themselves. Is it seriously intended to afford the slave protection? Secure to him the equal administration of just laws. Insist, without delay, on the same mode of trial for slaves in criminal cases, as for free persons. First, do legal right; reform the administration; purify the judicature: or be assured that it is not of the slightest importance whether or no, you effect any alteration in the law. In sending out to the colonies a new personification of abstract Justice, let due care be taken that her eyes are effectually bandaged, so that she cannot see the distinction of colour; let her scales be even; and her sword two-edged!

There is another evil to be remedied, to which a transient allusion may suffice. Justice, though firm and even-handed, must not be of a wild, military character; as when, a handy fellow having committed a crime,

> "Impartial justice in his stead, did
> Hang an old woman that was bed-rid."

It was "the deliberate opinion of his Majesty's Commissioners (of legal inquiry) that the foundation of every improvement, both as regards the black and the white population of these colonies, must be laid in an improved administration of justice, and in the admission of slave evidence."

These changes effected; the pure and equal administration of justice secured; the law itself respecting slaves, revised and softened; the slave attached to estates, and consequently the cruel separation of families by sales, whether judicial or voluntary, prevented; task-work introduced, and the labour of the slave thus rendered comparatively light and cheerful; the duration of slavery limited; the compensation of the master secured; the colonist reconciled to the ameliorating measures of government, by the provision of a fund expressly devoted to his indemnification; confidence restored, and credit revived: the pledge of government (which I, for one, do not expect them wholly to abandon), will be redeemed; the course will, indeed, be entered on, so truly stated by the able and unprejudiced writer I have so often with pleasure quoted, as the only one to be pursued:—"the adoption of such practical

measures as will not supersede injury by injury, but do good by certain though gradual progression."

I have the honour to remain,

With the truest respect,

&c. &c. &c.

FORTUNATUS DWARRIS.

The Right Hon. Henry Goulburn,
Chancellor of the Exchequer.

NOTES.

(*a*) To Lord Bathurst (I take the liberty of saying) justice has not been done. On the contrary, the former secretary of the colonies has been systematically attacked and loaded with unmerited obloquy. The noble lord does not stand in need of my vindication. But his own high-minded indifference to calumnious attacks will justify the interference of others in less conspicuous stations. To me, it has always been incomprehensible, how the meed of popular applause, so deservedly and ungrudgingly bestowed upon Mr. Peel, for his wise and liberal measures, in the reform of the criminal law of this country, should be withheld from Lord Bathurst; who, with equal zeal and sincerity, tempered with equal discretion and prudence, was steadily engaged, in his own proper department, in a similar improvement of the laws and judicial institutions of the colonies. I will instance one act of Lord Bathurst's administration, which should alone, in my judgment, entitle the noble lord to the respect and gratitude of all true friends of humanity and justice. I allude to an order in council, removing the restrictions and disabilities before imposed upon a certain class of persons in one of our islands: the emancipation, if I may so express it, of the free-coloured people of Trinidad. I select this particular measure, because it is complete in itself, and carried into full effect; and not, like other suggested improvements, only executory.

(King's Arms.)

Trinidad.

By his Excellency Sir Ralph James Woodford, Bart., Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the said Island and its Dependencies, Vice-Admiral of the same, &c. &c. &c.

(L. S.) Ralph James Woodford.

A Proclamation.

Whereas the several communications which have been addressed by the free people of colour in this Island to the Right Honourable the Earl Bathurst, K. G. His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Department of the Colonies, and afterward to His Majesty's Commissioners of Inquiry into the Administration of Justice in the West Indies; and also the communications which have been received by his Lordship from the Governor; and those which were addressed to the Commissioners by the Attorney-General of Trinidad, together with various Spanish and British Ordinances, all having reference to the rights and privileges claimed by that portion of His Majesty's subjects, have been brought under His Majesty's consideration.

And whereas His Majesty's Commissioners have reported their opinion to be, that, according to the Royal Cedula, issued by the King of Spain, on the 24th day of November, 1783, the free people of colour, who, as planters and heads of families, established themselves in the island, and obtained assignments of land, under the authority of that Cedula, and resided five years in that island, and bound themselves to an entire residence therein, and likewise the descendants of these, are entitled to all the rights and privileges of naturalization, and in consequence are eligible to all public employments, and to posts in the militia: His Majesty has been

pleased to declare his most gracious approval and confirmation of the said opinion, and to signify the Royal pleasure, that the said rights and privileges be enjoyed by those individuals and their descendants, and the same is hereby declared accordingly.

And whereas His Majesty's free-coloured subjects, who may have obtained grants of land otherwise than under the authority of the Royal Cedula of the 24th of November, 1783, are entirely excluded, according to the legal construction of that Cedula, from the benefits conferred by it; and, as such exclusion is not in accordance with His Majesty's gracious intentions towards them, it is His Majesty's pleasure that the same rights and privileges which are derived by those to whom, or to whose progenitors, assignments of land have been made under the Cedula, shall be equally enjoyed by all free persons of colour, being grantees of land, or descendants of grantees, provided that either they or their parents separately, shall have completed a twenty-one years' term of residence in Trinidad, or that the number of years which their parents, collectively with the number of years which they themselves shall have resided, shall amount to twenty-one years or more.

Given under my hand, and the great seal of the island, at Government House, in the Town of Port of Spain, this fifth day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-six, and in the sixth year of His Majesty's reign.

By his Excellency's command,

FREDERICK HAMMET,
Acting Secretary.

(King's Arms.)

Trinidad.

By his Excellency Sir Ralph James Woodford, Bart. Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the said Island and its Dependencies, Vice-Admiral thereof, &c. &c. &c.

(L. S.) RALPH JAMES WOODFORD.

A Proclamation.

Whereas, for the relief and satisfaction of all His Majesty's free coloured subjects whatsoever, in the Island of Trinidad, and in consideration of the representations which they have made, of the manner in which certain orders and regulations bear upon persons of their condition, His Majesty has been pleased to direct, that a proclamation shall be issued, revoking and rendering of none effect the following instruments, or such portions of them as are hereinafter specified:

It is hereby ordered, proclaimed, and declared, that from and after the date hereof, the following instruments, or such parts of them as are hereinafter specified, shall be revoked and rendered of none effect:

First,—So much of the first article, under the title, "Des Alguacils," of General Picton's instructions to Commandants, of 20th of August, 1800, as imposes the office of Alguacils exclusively upon free people of colour.

Second,—The Order of the Governor in Council of the 15th August, 1807, imposing a tax of sixteen dollars upon balls given by coloured persons.

Third,—The Order of the Governor in Council of the 29th of November, 1804, directing, "Free coloured persons and slaves to retire to their homes at half-past nine o'clock at night," in so far as relates to free coloured persons.

Fourth,—The Order of the Governor, in concurrence with his Assessor and the Alcaldes in ordinary, of the 12th Sep-

tember, 1810, respecting the police of Port of Spain, together with the explanatory regulation of the 18th of the same month, except in so far as relates to slaves found in the street at night, without passes from their owners.

Fifth,—The Regulation of the 30th June, 1813, establishing the fees to be received for passes in the office of the Government Secretary, in so far as it creates a distinction between those to be received from white persons, and those to be received from free coloured persons.

Sixth,—An Order of the Superior Court of the 3rd of August, 1819, requiring parties to describe their condition, in their petitions to the tribunals.

Seventh,—An Order of the Governor, of the 11th of April, 1821, promulgating a schedule of fees to be charged by medical practitioners in the colony.

Given under my hand, and the great seal of the island, at Government House, in the Town of Port of Spain, this fifth day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty six, and in the sixth year of His Majesty's reign.

By his Excellency's command,

FREDERICK HAMMET,

Acting Secretary.

(*b*) Meaning discussions with reflecting, enlightened, dispassionate, high-minded persons, of *all* parties; among whom it is an act of justice, of duty, and of pleasure, to include and mention by name, my friend (if he will allow me so to call him) Mr. James Stephen, jun.

(*c*) The latest illustration of this subject is afforded by the recent Report on the subject of Titles to Lands in Trinidad. It was contended by the Governor that, by the colonial law of Spain (that is, the law of the Indies), lands granted by the

Crown were liable to resumption for defect of, or for partial, cultivation. This was at a time when cultivation could only have been carried on by slaves. Upon this principle occupiers were compelled by the proclamation of the present Governor to place negroes upon their lands, in a proportion of *one* for every *five* quarrèes, in conformity, it was said, both to the Royal Cedula, and to the general law of Spain.

(*d*) See Mr. Barham's unanswerable pamphlet, and "The West India Question Practically Considered." The latter writer adds: "After this, not many persons will be disposed to contend that Great Britain has not had at least an equal share, in establishing slavery, with those who happen now to be the actual owners of slaves!"

(*e*) On the suppression of the religious orders, and the appropriation of their revenues to the general purposes of the government, by the Emperor Joseph II., the author of the Life of Napoleon Bonaparte, in tracing the remote causes of the French Revolution, justly observes: "It had something in it to flatter the feelings of those of the Reformed religion; but, in a moral point of view, the seizing upon the property of any private individual or public body is an invasion of the most sacred principles of public justice, and such spoliation cannot be vindicated by urgent circumstances of state necessity, or any plausible pretext of state advantage whatsoever: since no necessity can vindicate what is in itself unjust, and no public advantage can compensate a breach of public faith." In the progress of the Revolution "there was one order in the kingdom which, although it had joined largely and readily in the sacrifices of *the day of dupes*, was still considered as indebted to the state, and was doomed to undergo an act of total spoliation. The clergy had agreed, and the assembly had decreed on the 4th of August, that the tithes

should be declared redeemable at a moderate price by the proprietors subject to pay them. This regulation ratified at least the legality of the clergy's title; nevertheless, in violation of the public faith thus pledged, the Assembly, three days after, pretended, that the surrender of the tithes had been absolute, and that, in lieu of that supposed revenue, the nation was only bound to provide decently for the administration of divine worship. It was in vain that the clergy exclaimed against these acts of rapine and extortion; in vain that they resounded in the hall, the declaration solemnly adopted, that property was inviolable, save upon full compensation. It was to little purpose that Mirabeau was reminded of his language, addressed to the Emperor Joseph upon a similar occasion: 'Despise the monks,' he had said, 'as much as you will, but do not rob them. Robbery is equally a crime, whether perpetrated on the most profligate atheist, or the most bigoted capuchin.'"

(*f*) See Mr. Smith of Southam's benevolent plan for parish dispensaries; a scheme well deserving the serious attention of those humane and excellent persons, who are extensively capable, as well as sincerely desirous, of bettering the condition of the poor.

(*g*) See, upon this subject, my colleague Mr. Henry's excellent little work, entitled a Treatise on Manumissions, containing points and doctrines from the Roman law, applicable (or easily to be made so) to all colonies; while a Spanish *fuero* (custom) could only have a moral influence beyond its legal operation, in the Spanish colonies. Accordingly we find it observed by the planters of Demerara and the old English islands, in stating their objections to the compulsory manumission clause, that to force upon them a principle entirely new, and as they think highly objectionable,

is a measure more harsh, oppressive, and unjust, than it would be considered merely to give increased effect to an existing law, as in the case of Trinidad.

(*h*) See Hakewell and Cresswell, *arguendo:* 3 vol. State Trials, proceedings relating to the liberty of the subject.

(*i*) One of the undoubted effects of the compulsory manumission clause will be to check, if not to put a complete end to, voluntary manumissions. How they were increasing may be perceived from the following statistical table for the island of St. Lucie, transmitted to Lord Bathurst by M. Jeremie, first president of the council, the very able, learned, and judicious compiler of a new slave-code for that island.

Manumissions from 1822 to 1825:

Manumissions, 1822 about 28.
„ 1823 „ 100.
„ 1824 „ 150 acts of manumission; many of which will have contained the affranchissement of several individuals; for in 1823 the number of persons freed amounted to 212; in 1825, supposed about the same."

M. Jeremie adds the following explanatory remarks: "The only effectual way of serving the slave is to reduce the expense. Since the tax on manumission was in the first place reduced, then entirely withdrawn, enfranchisements here increased in the number of upwards of four to one."

Is not the "better an enemy of the good," in this instance?

(*k*) It is highly gratifying to find a liberal and enlightened statesman, like Mr. Huskisson, acknowledging the value and importance of our now depreciated colonies. It is satisfactory too, to find *him* not unmindful that it is British capital which

has been so largely invested in these distant possessions; and that the impending ruin of those establishments, which have contributed so essentially to the extent and prosperity of our navigation and commerce, concerns London and Liverpool, Bristol and Glasgow, much more than the islands of the chain of the Antilles!

THE END.

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